



Data Sharing System (DSS)

General User Guide

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
2801 Kensington Avenue
Richmond, VA 23221

March 2012

Introduction

DHR Mission Statement

To identify, evaluate, register, and help communities and citizens preserve, interpret, and use Virginia's rich historic assets for the economic, educational and cultural benefit of all.

Introduction

This User Guide is a reference guide for the users of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) Data Sharing System (DSS). It explains the operation and the use of the system.

DSS is both a resource recordation tool and a powerful research tool. DSS merges a geographic information system (GIS) with a comprehensive information database of historic and prehistoric sites throughout Virginia. Access to DSS is restricted to authorized users in order to protect potentially sensitive information about the location of some historic resources.

As of March 2012 there are over 125,000 archaeological and architectural resources individually recorded in the DSS. The locations of these resources are also digitized within the GIS component of the DSS. This number includes districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register, the National Register of Historic Places, resources that have been evaluated for potential listing in the registers, as well as tens of thousands of other historic resources that have been recorded and added to the DHR's permanent inventory. Thousands of additional records of contributing and non-contributing properties within historic districts are also entered into the database.

Each resource is identified in the DSS by a unique DHR identification number that is assigned after a historic property, district, object, structure or site has been surveyed by professionals working in the field. Once the resource has been surveyed and documented by traditional methods (hardcopies of maps, survey information and photographs for architectural resources) and the survey data has been entered into the DSS, the submitted information will be reviewed by the appropriate architectural or archaeological inventory manager.

Tip: To see how DSS fits in with cultural resource survey requirements and environmental review, see the *Guidelines for Cultural Resource Survey in Virginia* for more information. The latest version of the *Guidelines* may be downloaded from the DHR website.

DSS Overview

History of DSS

The Historic Resources Data Sharing System (DSS) is the result of a joint venture between the Department of Historic Resources and the Virginia Department of Transportation initiated in 2001. The two agencies collaborated in order to provide a platform for dissemination of, and enhancements to, survey records in the DHR inventory. This online system merges a database of historic and prehistoric sites throughout Virginia with a geographic information system (GIS) to allow for more efficient querying.

Before implementation of the Data Sharing System, DHR maintained over 100,000 electronic survey records with the former Integrated Preservation Software database (IPS). IPS was much more limited in the amount and types of data it could handle. Resources recorded prior to 2002 were recorded in IPS. These former IPS records may appear partially incomplete in DSS. Efforts are ongoing to enrich the current DSS records with additional information contained in hard copy form within the physical files for the resources maintained at DHR.

Structure of DSS

The two primary components of DSS are GIS mapping interface and the management system for text-based records.

The DSS GIS allows users to view the location of architectural resources, historic districts, archaeological sites, and other historic resources in reference to USGS topographic quadrangle maps and aerial photography. This tool may be used to locate historic resources and their associated data, as well as to create PDF maps for later use.

The non-spatial data (Attribute) component of DSS is further subdivided into two branches – one for resources recorded as archaeological sites and one for architectural resources, including individual buildings, structures, objects, historic districts, and cemeteries.

Tip: Currently, cemeteries with visible grave markers should be recorded as architectural resources. If there are no visible grave markers, the consultant intends to undertake archaeological testing, or there will be/has been ground disturbing activities at the location, record cemeteries as archaeological resources as well.

Tip: Information about historic resources recorded with DHR prior to 2002 may appear incomplete in DSS records. Contact DHR Archives for information on more detailed paper records.

DSS Accounts

There are two primary types of DSS accounts: **limited access** accounts and **full access** accounts.

Limited access accounts are complimentary. These accounts are used for data entry. The records created are submitted to DHR for quality control review prior to being available for query in the database. Reports will be run for information associated with the specific account only. No general database or GIS queries functions are available.

Full access accounts are subscription-based for 12-month and 3-month periods. Full access account holders may enter data, query and run reports against all reviewed records in DSS (web application and GIS side) and generate reports. Full access 12-month subscriptions have the option to purchase geospatial data services.

For more information on obtaining a DSS account and for a schedule of fees, please contact the DSS Accounts Manager.

Navigating the interface

Launching DSS

The DSS is accessed entirely through your desktop Internet browser. The system has been designed for use with Microsoft's Internet Explorer, version 5.X and higher. **DSS is not compatible with Mozilla Firefox, Safari, Google Chrome, or other browsers.**

To launch DSS, enter the following URL in the Address Bar: www.hrdss.state.va.us. The DHR DSS Disclaimer and Login screen will appear.

Disclaimer

The DSS Introductory screen has two main components, the first of which is the Disclaimer Statement. Each user must read this statement thoroughly to understand what DSS is intended to provide and to ensure that users respect the sensitive nature of the resources included in the system at each use. By logging into the system you are agreeing to the terms of this statement.

System Login

The second component of this screen consists of the login entry boxes and buttons. Enter your assigned user name and password in the appropriate entry box. Neither the user name or password fields are case-sensitive

After filling in these fields, click on the Login button to enter the system.



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Data Sharing System

DHR serves as the official state repository for information on historic resources. This information has been compiled primarily by independent consultants and volunteers. DHR makes no warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of the data for any purposes.

The absence of historic resources in DHR records does not necessarily mean that no historic properties are present. It is possible that the area in question has not been systematically surveyed for resources.

Obtaining information on previously recorded historic properties does not constitute review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. If a project is federally funded, licensed, or assisted, the federal agency may require you to obtain DHR consent under Section 106. If you are requesting a review of your project on behalf of a federal agency, you may download a Project Review Form from our web site at www.dhr.virginia.gov. DHR consent under Section 106 is a separate process and cannot be accomplished by either an archival search or accounting inventory data on-line.

Due to the fragile and amorphous nature of historic and archaeological sites, locational information on historic properties is exempted from the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. Access to this database is by password and license only. Any user logging on should already have been approved by a duly authorized or licensed organization that has agreed to certain conditions for access and use of this data. In accessing this database, the user affirms that the information derived will not be used to the detriment of the resource and accepts responsibility to take reasonable precautions to ensure the security of site location information.

For more information on obtaining a user license, please contact Jeff Smith via email at Jeff.Smith@dhr.virginia.gov or by phone at 804-367-2323, extension 118. Click here to obtain a copy of the [Application and User Agreement](#).

Clicking on the LOGIN button below signifies your acceptance of the above disclaimer

User Name:

Password:

Navigation and System Overview

The Attribute portion of DSS adheres to a standard template for each screen. Below is a description of each component of this template.

Title Bar

The topmost section of every non-GIS DSS screen is filled by the Title Bar. This bar stretches across the full width of the screen and contains a graphic background of historic images. The system title and DHR's street address are listed here along with three functional links. These three links: Help, About DSS, and Logout may be used from any point in the system. Both Help and About DSS access text based information, while Logout generates a prompt to exit the system and return to the login screen.

Top Menu Mar

The Menu Bar shown at the top of all non-GIS screens holds six menu topics with one or more sub-functions available under each function. The visibility of the sub-functions depends on the security profile that you have been assigned. Detailed descriptions of each item are provided in later sections of this manual.



- **GIS**

There is one sub-function available from the GIS menu item, depending on the security profile you have been assigned.

- Map



- **Attribute Menu**

Two attribute menu choices are available depending on the security profile you have been assigned.

- Query
- Standard Report



- **Field Data Support Menu**

Field Data Support is designed to provide data submission functions for all authorized users including.

- Create New Records
- Edit Work-In-Progress
- Templating
- Survey Form Download



- **Data Sharing Support Menu**

The eight databases that have been planned for future inclusion in the DSS are listed in this menu, along with a listing for the data export for Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) internal systems use. Currently, these links are not active.

- Easements
- CRM Annotated Reports
- Highway Markers
- State Grants
- Tax Credits
- Carbon 14
- Agency Contacts/Owners
- Project Review
- VDOT Data Sharing



- **Admin Menu**

The majority of Administration Menu items are only available to the DSS administrators. The one function available to all users is Submit User Comments.

- Create User
- Edit User
- Submit User Comments
- Review User Comments
- Maintain Lookup Tables

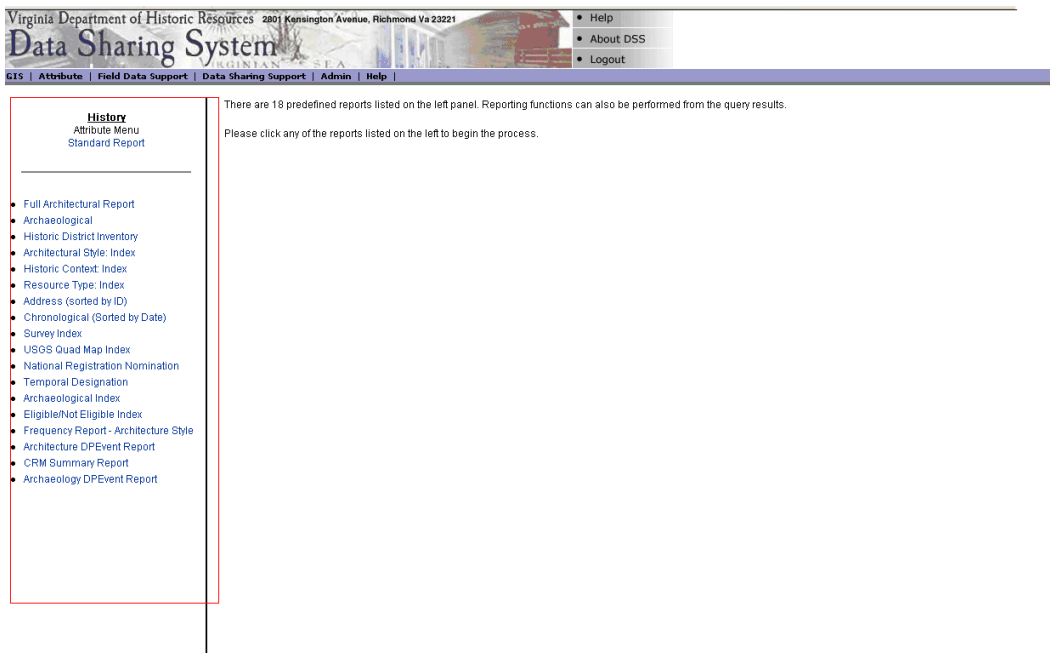
- **Help Menu**

The Help Menu items are available to all users of the DSS.

- User Manual
- Data Manual

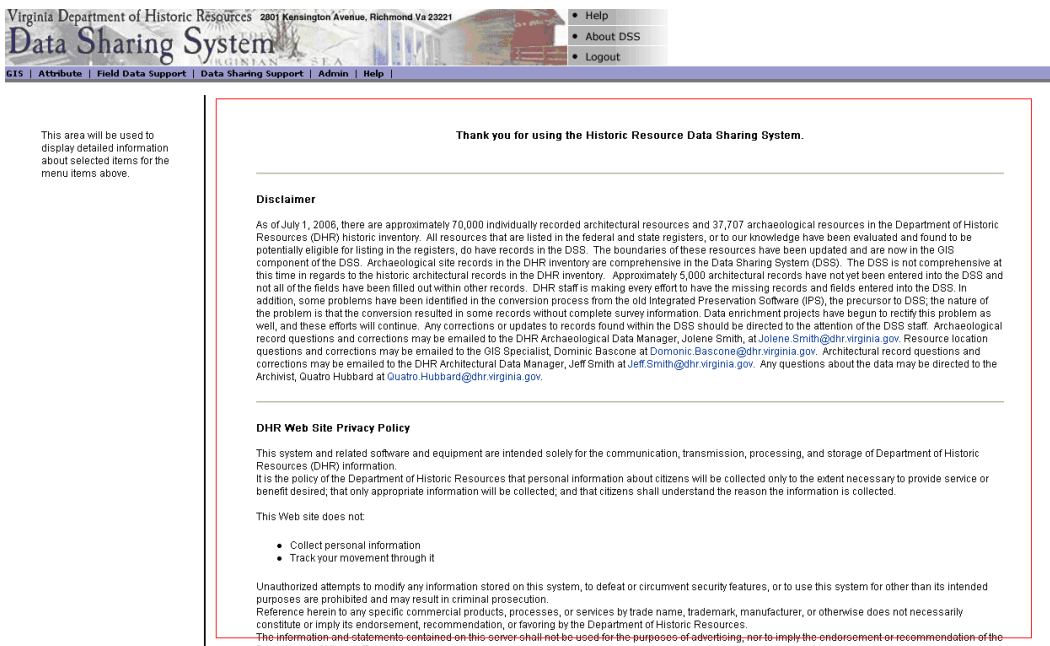
Left Screen List Bar

Unless you have selected to enter the Geographic Information System (GIS) portion of the DSS or the DSS home page, you will see the Screen List Bar on the left-hand side of the screen throughout all portions of the DSS. Initially the Screen List Bar displays one or more links that allow you to progress through the current function. Once you have entered a sub-function, the Screen List Bar presents the ordered list of screens for entry. For example, when entering the Create Records/Architecture function, this list will contain the ordered list of all Architecture data entry screens. You may not use this list to move from screen to screen; the data entry screens may only be accessed sequentially.



Central Frame

The Central Frame occupies the lower right two-thirds of the screen.



- **Meta Data**

Upon first entering a menu function, the Central Frame will contain high-level information, called metadata, about the current function and screens.

Forms

Once you select a list item in the Left Screen List Bar, the contents of the Central Frame change to a form displaying the data relevant to your selection. This form may be a data entry form, query results, or a dialog box requesting additional actions to create reports. The contents of these forms provide the core of the DSS.

Geographic Information System

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) allow data to be displayed according to their spatial attributes. Through GIS, users can view sites superimposed on a background map. This gives the user the advantage of seeing the geographic locations of sites within a research area, as well as to be able to view their distribution alongside other selected layers. A GIS containing cultural resource data gives Architectural Historians and Archaeologists the advantage of reducing the time it takes to perform contracted survey work and general research on any given area within the state.

- **GIS Menu**

The first menu in the top menu bar is GIS. This menu choice will launch the Hyperlink Text Markup Language (HTML) GIS viewer, presenting you with the entry-level DSS map.



- **Map**

When the Map is selected, a new window will pop up. For help using this GIS interface, please see the Help section within the new window.



Tip: To arrange for the purchase of geospatial data from DHR, contact the DSS Manager. At this time, DSS GIS is not equipped to generate or export geospatial data.

Retrieving Information about Cultural Resources

Attribute

The detailed non-spatial data related to historic resources in Virginia is available in the Attribute portion of the DSS. The two Attribute menu options are Query and Standard Report.

Querying

DSS provides querying tools for answering questions about the resource attribute data. Basic query tools are available in the areas of Architecture and Archaeology. New queries may be created using forms featuring pre-determined criteria options. Saved queries may be selected from the Query Inbox available from either Architecture or Archaeology. To begin a query, select Query under Attribute in the top menu bar. Then select Architecture Search or Archaeology Search from the Left Screen List. Either of these selections will launch the Query Inbox, listing any previous queries that have been saved. You may either select a query from this list or click the New Query button to launch the search criteria input screen. Note: the New Query button is located at the bottom of the page beneath the list of any previously saved queries.

Query Details	AERVIN
Query Details	LPAONESSA
Query Details	CHUSTON
Query Details	JBSTEWART
Query Details	BMCDONALD
Query Details	AARCHER
Query Details	LMANCUSO
Query Details	DFROST

Regardless of whether you choose to create a new query or use an existing saved query, you will proceed to the search criteria screen. The search criteria screen includes a list of DSS fields that can be used singly or in combinations to select resource data. Saved queries will already have the appropriate criteria fields filled in. You may accept the saved criteria or change them as desired.

Only one choice from each pick list may be selected during a search. For a complete listing of the specific fields included in this screen, please see the Data Manual. Once you have filled in or selected the values to be searched by, click the Search button. If you would like to modify your search, click the Reset button. To return to the previous screen, click the Cancel button.

Tip: Querying functionality is only available to full access DSS account holders.

Tip: Querying functionality is enhanced by selecting or entering a minimal amount of data prior to clicking the Search button. In the event that too many results are returned from a simple query, you may run the query again with additional data entered to help in restricting the results. For example, in order to perform a successful resource name query, use a single keyword or portion of a keyword rather than multiple words. The query could then be further refined by selecting a county or independent city name from the drop down list if too many results were returned from the initial query.

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Architectural Search
Archaeology Search

DSS Archaeology Search Screen

DHR ID#

County or Independent City

CRM Event Type

CRM Event: Person/Organization

Research Name

Specimens Obtained

Specimens Reported

Carbon 14

Drainage

Physiographic Province

Site Class

DHR Historic Context

Historic Example

Current Example

Current Use

Cultural Affiliation

Temporal Affiliation

USDS Quad

Created By

After clicking the Search button, the Results screen will load. A selection check box appears to the left of each record. This box must be checked to select or “mark” the record for further action. Multiple records can be selected by either individually checking the boxes or by using the Select All button on the bottom right of the central frame. The first link to the right of the check box is the Map link. When clicked, this link will launch the GIS interface and plot the “marked” resource on the map. Next to the Map link is the Details link. When records have been selected, clicking on this link allows you to view either architectural survey forms or archaeological site forms. These reports contain detailed information about the selected records.

At the bottom of the screen is a Report pull-down list of the pre-formatted reports available to you. First select the appropriate report from the list, and then click on the Run Report button. The report is generated utilizing the data records you selected from your query results.

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Architectural Search
Archaeology Search

DSS Criteria

Query Name

The asterisk * means there are multiple entries.

DSS Search Results: 21 Record(s) Retrieved

Link (x)	Map Details Photo(s)	DHR ID#	County	Resource Name	Theme	Historic Example	Current Example	Temporal Desc
<input type="checkbox"/>	Map Details Photo(s)	44HE0002	Henrico		Indeterminate		Agricultural field, Dwelling, multiple, Other	17th Century, 18th Century, 19th Century, 19th/20th Century/Unknown
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Map Details Photo(s)	44HE0084	Henrico		Indeterminate		Agricultural field	18th Century
<input type="checkbox"/>	Map Details Photo(s)	44HE0884	Henrico	Wilson Plantation	Domestic, Settlement Patterns	Lithic scatter, Other, Trash pit	Agricultural field, Forest	17th Century, 18th Century, 20th Century, Late Archaic, Middle Archaic
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Map Details Photo(s)	44HE0728	Henrico		Domestic, Indeterminate	Dwelling, multiple	Agricultural field	17th Century, 18th/19th century, 18th Century, 19th Century, 20th Century
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Map Details Photo(s)	44HE0450	Henrico	Wilson Site	Domestic	Comp, temporary, Dwelling, single, Trash scatter	Agricultural field, Forest	18th Century, 19th Century, Prehistoric/Unknown
<input type="checkbox"/>	Map Details Photo(s)	44HT0704	Henrico		Domestic		Agricultural field	17th Century, 18th Century
<input type="checkbox"/>	Map Details Photo(s)	44HE0637	Henrico		Domestic, Indeterminate	Comp, Hamlet	Agricultural field	18th Century, 19th Century, Late Archaic, Middle Archaic, Middle Woodland
<input type="checkbox"/>	Map Details Photo(s)	44HE0677	Henrico		Domestic	Comp, Hamlet	Agricultural field	18th Century, 19th Century

Save Query | Delete Query

Report:

The Results Summary screen also includes a title box containing either the name of the saved query or a blank field allowing you to enter a new name to save the current query. If this is a new query that you would like to reuse, then click the Save button at the bottom of the screen after entering a title. If you no longer wish to keep a saved query you may click the Delete Query button to remove it. To exit from this query screen, click the Cancel button.

Tip: A record is only returned in a query if it currently holds “Reviewed” status in the database. Records that are “In Progress” (in a DSS user’s edit box) or “Submitted” (in the inventory manager’s quality control/quality assurance edit box) will not be returned using a query.

Tip: The query fields are not case sensitive, **except** for the DHR ID# field on the DSS Archaeology Search Screen.

Query Fields

There are 24 fields available on the DSS Architecture Search Screen. Below are notes to assist in the use of some of these fields.

Reminder: Fields with drop down lists, such as County or Independent City, or What is it, only allow for a single entry from that field in a search.

DHR ID# - This field is broken up into three sections. The first section allows for querying using the first three digits in an architectural resource file number, the second section for the secondary four digits in a file number, and the third section for tertiary numbers, also of four digits, in the file number for a resource in a historic district. Wild cards are not needed to use these fields, and alpha and special characters should not be included in a query.

Query examples:

- To return all of the Reviewed DSS records in the county of Chesterfield, which has the prefix of 020, 020 can be entered in the first box, and then Search selected at the bottom of the screen.
- To return the first 10 DSS records in the county of Amherst, 005 should be entered in the first box, and then 000 in the next box. This will return all records with file numbers with the DHR ID# ranging from 005-0001 through 005-0009.

Note: DHR ID# queries return records not only with a primary file number that matches the query, but also records with the Other DHR ID# that matches the query.

NR Resource Type: Do not use this field. It will only return records that were initially created in the earlier IPS database. This field is not available for data entry in the DSS, so any records created since 2001 will not be returned through the use of this query.

Resource Name: The most common mistake made by users of this field in a search is to enter too much information. Complete words are not necessary, as the search of just a section of a word will return all records with that series of characters in that order in a resource name. For example: to successfully search for the Southwest Mountains Historic District, enter the word **southwest** in the Resource Name field. If there are too many records returned from this search, then run the query

again, but with the addition of a specific County or Independent City if known, or with a What Is It selection of Historic District.

Street Name: As with Resource Name, the most common mistake in using this field in a query is entering too much information. If querying East Main Street, only enter the word **main** in the search, as East Main Street could be in the database with the words in a different order, and with various abbreviations.

CRMEvent: PersonOrganization: This field searches the Last Name field for a CRM Event. It will only return records that have a single word in that field. For example, a search for **wagner** will only return a record that has Wagner in the Last Name field for an event in that record's CRM Event section, and not a record that has Marc Wagner entered in the Last Name field alone. A search of **wag** will also work if Wagner is in the Last Name field.

Year Built (YYYY): A search using this field is currently not reliable. Due to DSS enhancements in 2007, this field is no longer updated in the DSS. The earlier single Year Built field was eliminated, with the date for a resource now indicated by the Year Built entered for that record's Primary Resource. This query still points to the old field, so a search under Year Built will only return records created in the DSS prior to 2007, and not updated in the database since.

Material: Do not use this field in a search, as it will not return any results.

Status: Do not use this field in a search, as it will not return useful results.

Historic Religious Affiliation and Ethnic Affiliation: These fields are contained in the detailed entries for cemeteries, and will only return cemetery records.

There are 19 files on the DSS Archaeology Search Screen.

Resource Name: This field will return limited, unreliable results. Some site forms will return with a

Specimens Obtained and Specimens Reported: These fields are unreliable. Searches under the response of Yes will return reliable results, but searches under No may return site records that were initially entered into the earlier IPS database under Not Evaluated or with a blank field. These earlier records were defaulted to responses of No when the records were converted for use in the DSS.

Carbon 14 and Current Use: These fields do not return any results.

Temporal Affiliation: This field has very specific selections, which must match the exact same selection in a record for that record to be returned in a search. For example: if a record was created with a specific temporal affiliation of 17th Century: 1st Quarter, it will not return in a search if 17th Century is selected for the search, unless 17th Century was another specific temporal affiliation entered into the DSS record.

Creating Reports

Standard Reports

There are a number of pre-formatted reports available through the DSS. The menu choices along the left panel of the Standard Report screen currently link to either the basic architecture or archaeology queries. DHR staff is aware of this issue.

- **Generate Report**

There are two methods of generating any of the pre-formatted DSS reports from the Attribute portion of the database (see the Help menu within the GIS interface for directions on generating reports from within the mapping):

- Attribute/Standard Reports menu choice
- Run Report button Within the Query Results screen

(This section will describe the use of the Standard Report menu choice. Please refer to the Query section of this manual for a description of the second method of report generation.)

After selecting Standard Report from the Attribute sub-menu, select Full Architectural Report or Archaeological. Reports may be run on one or more records, but users should not attempt to query the entire dataset to avoid extensive response times and system slowdown.

One Record Reports

You may select the appropriate report format from: Adobe PDF, Microsoft Word, or Rich Text. Enter the DHR identification number for the resource to be reported on. Click the Create Report button to generate the report. If you have made an incorrect entry you may reset the entire form by clicking the Reset Form button, or simply retype your entry in the appropriate box.

Note: Formatting reports can take time. Avoid the temptation to click “create report” more than once. To determine if your report is being processed, roll your mouse over the top bar of the window and check for an hourglass displayed with your pointer.

After requesting to generate the report, the following text will appear on the screen: “Export Complete. Click Here to View or Right Click to Download the File.” You may view the report in the current dialog box (which limits your sizing capabilities) by left clicking. Or, you can view the report in a New Window (standard sizing options available) by right clicking and choosing Open in New Window. You can also print or save the report by right clicking and choosing the appropriate command.

If you choose the Save Target As option, then you will see the standard window used by Internet Explorer, allowing you to select the name, file type and location of the report to save.

If you select the Print Target option, you will see a standard Windows print dialog box allowing you to select your printer and printer settings.

Selected Records Reports

To generate reports for a group of records, click the Selected Records text after selecting the name of the report you would like to generate. This selection will launch the Query Inbox screen for either Architecture or Archaeology. To change from one to the other, make a selection in the left panel, choosing either Architecture Search or Archaeology Search. You will see a list of saved queries. You

may begin with one of these, or scroll down to the bottom of the page and select New Query to begin a new one.

Tip: Both the Query and Standard Report options from the Attribute pull down will generate printable data about historic resources. If you know the DHR identification number of the individual resource in question, choose Standard Report and One Record to bypass the query form.

Tip: When attempting to run a single report, DHR identification numbers must be entered correctly (see the following examples) Architectural: 000-0001 or 000-0025-0002; Archaeological: 44AB0036 or 44YO0777. Entering incorrectly formatted resource numbers will result in a null result return.

Tip: If you're looking for architectural "field forms" or archaeological "site forms," you'll find them in the Field Data Support portion of DSS, or the current forms may also be downloaded from the DHR website.

To define your dataset for the report, simply use a saved query or define new criteria as described in the Query section of this manual. When your query results are displayed, a selection check box appears to the left of each record. This box must be checked to select or "mark" the record for further action. Multiple records can be selected by either individually checking the boxes or by using the Select All button.

After selecting records, choosing the appropriate report type, and clicking the Run Report button, you may select the desired report format: Adobe PDF, Microsoft Word, or Rich Text. Click the Create Report button to generate the report. If you have made an incorrect entry you may reset the entire form by clicking the Reset Form button, or simply retype your entry in the appropriate box.

After requesting to generate the report, the following text will appear on the screen: "Export Complete. Click Here to View or Right Click to Download the File." You may view the report in the current dialog box (which limits your sizing capabilities) by left clicking. Or, you can view the report in a New Window (standard sizing options available) by right clicking and choosing Open in New Window. You can also print or save the report by right clicking and choosing the appropriate command.

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